



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html

MARCH 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FIVE MEN INDICTED FOR ATTEMPTING TO ENTICE A MINOR FOR ILLICIT SEX

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that five men – including a youth swim coach, a prison guard and a commercial airline pilot – have been indicted by a federal grand jury, in separate and unrelated cases, for attempting to entice a minor through the Internet to engage in illicit sexual activity.

“These indictments are all the result of undercover investigative work by a detective in the Boone County Sheriff’s Department,” Graves said. “In each case, the defendant thought he was communicating online with a teenage girl. In reality, he was communicating with an undercover law enforcement officer.”

Undercover operations, Graves explained, are an essential crime prevention tool. “Our goal is to stop child sexual predators before they contact a real victim,” Graves said. “If they are soliciting an undercover agent for sex, that means they are already acting out their fantasies, and it’s just a matter of time before they victimize a real boy or girl.”

* **Jeffrey M. Vernace**, 31, of Valley Park, Mo., was charged with using the Internet to attempt to entice a minor to engage in sexual activity in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Jefferson City on Friday, March 3, 2006. **Vernace** was the head coach for the Clayton Shaw Park Swim Club in Clayton, Mo.

The indictment alleges that, from Dec. 2, 2004, to Jan. 8, 2005, **Vernace** attempted to entice a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity.

* **Robert Lee Malone**, 50, of Linn, Mo., was charged with using the Internet to attempt to entice a minor to engage in sexual activity in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Jefferson City on Friday, March 3, 2006. **Malone** is a prison guard for the Missouri Department

of Corrections.

The indictment alleges that, from March 7 to 25, 2005, **Malone** attempted to entice a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity.

* **Arthur Pinneo**, 33, of Saint Ann, Mo., was charged with using the Internet to attempt to entice a minor to engage in sexual activity in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Jefferson City on Friday, March 3, 2006. **Pinneo** is a commercial airline pilot.

The indictment alleges that, from Oct. 5 to 8, 2004, **Pinneo** attempted to entice a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity.

* **William S. Pace**, 34, of California, Mo., was charged with using the Internet to attempt to entice a minor to engage in sexual activity in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Jefferson City on Friday, March 3, 2006.

The indictment alleges that, on Dec. 2 and 8, 2005, **Pace** attempted to entice a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity.

* **Shaun A. Lueckenhoff**, 26, of Jefferson City, Mo., was charged in a two-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Jefferson City on Friday, March 3, 2006.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that, on Oct. 15, 2004, **Lueckenhoff** attempted to entice a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity.

Count Two of the federal indictment alleges that, on Oct. 15, 2004, **Lueckenhoff** used the Internet to attempt to transfer obscene matter to a person who had not yet reached the age of 16.

Under federal statutes, the offense of using the Internet to entice a minor to engage in sexual activity carries a mandatory minimum sentence of five years in federal prison without parole, up to 30 years in federal prison without parole.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in these indictments are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

These cases are all being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia L. Phillips. There were all investigated by the Boone County, Mo., Sheriff's Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html